



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

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GOVERNOR

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SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

June 7, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Lisa M. Hansknecht, Director, Office of State and Federal Relations

SUBJECT: State and Federal Legislative Update

STATE UPDATE

School Aid and Michigan Department of Education Budget – FY 2013

The School Aid and Michigan Department of Education (MDE) budgets were finalized and sent to the Governor for his signature which is expected in the next two weeks. Documents summarizing the House and Senate versions of both budgets (MDE and School Aid) and the actual conference reports are available online:

School Aid: <http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?2012-HB-5372> Michigan Department of Education: <http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?2012-HB-5365>

Per previous reports, please note that the \$500,000 for the State Superintendent/ State Board of Education line item was restored in the final version.

Seat-time Waiver Legislation

The Senate Education Committee held a hearing on House Bill 5392 (introduced by Representative Margaret O'Brien) which codifies the current model of seat-time waivers while still allowing for waivers in other forms to be presented and possibly granted by the Superintendent of Public Instruction in the future. This was described in more detail in the April Legislative Update to the State Board.

The bill is a positive move for schools and helpful to the Department and State in terms of capacity and streamlining work. In an interesting move, the Michigan Association of Public School Academies and the Council of Michigan Authorizers testified about their concerns with the bill – which essentially allows traditional community public schools to provide cyber and blended learning without requiring they convert to a charter to do so.

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The Committee is expected to take the bill up again next week and the intent is to move it through the Senate and to the Governor before the summer legislative recess.

Burdensome and Obsolete Reports

The House Education Committee took up a package of bills (HBs 5627 to 5636) based on the list of burdensome and obsolete reports created by MDE in conjunction with the Education Alliance and Representatives Shirkey and Poleski. The bills cover most of the obsolete reports. Brad Biladeau, from the Michigan Association of School Administrators, testified before the committee to support the bills and asked the members to introduce and pass the bills and to include even more of the reports on the list. The Committee reported the bills, which are expected to pass the House prior to the legislative recess.

Accreditation Repeal

Legislation was introduced to remove the current accreditation requirement and replace it with a system in which MDE would approve one or more optional third-party accreditation systems. The State Board's position was expressed to the House Education Committee that the preference was for the House and Senate to move on the new Michigan School Accreditation proposal presented to the Committee last year. If that were not to happen, the State Board preferred that the accreditation law be repealed rather than create a third-party system that does not align with Michigan's other accountability measures. The House Committee substituted the legislation with a bill to do just that. House Bill 5659 was reported from House Education and would repeal the section of law requiring a state accreditation system. This bill is expected to pass the House before the break and may move in the Senate as well.

Kindergarten Start Age

As previously reported, there are two legislative packages moving related to the starting age for kindergarten. The packages are being recombined in order to have one bill from the House and one from the Senate (HB 4513 and SB 316). They are expected to pass both chambers and be sent to the Governor before the summer legislative recess.

I hope this information is helpful to you. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these or other legislative issues, please feel free to contact me at 517-335-5310.